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Mr. George Laskar
Environmental Programs Branch
Albuquerque Operations Office
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000025316

Dear George:

On May 14, 1987, I visited the Rocky Flats Plant to observe ongoing field activities and review data collected to date under the Rocky Flats Comprehensive Environmental Assessment and Response Program (CEARP) Remedial Investigation (RI). Current investigations are centered on the 881 hillside and the 903 pad.

Drilling activities have been initiated. Two drill rigs were in the field below the 881 hillside. I observed the drilling activities and talked with the geologist on each rig. The drillers are taking continuous cores and screening them with an HNU photoionizer. The cores from one rig were also being screened for alpha contamination. Some of the wells under construction are shallow alluvial wells that hit bedrock (a claystone) within just a few feet. Others are drilled into the bedrock to look for possible sand lenses that may be water bearing. The continued high level of precipitation (creating muddy field conditions) is making drill rig access difficult and causing extra work to stabilize the rigs. These difficulties have caused slight additional slippage in the drilling schedule; however, the time may be recovered as drilling progresses. Estimated slip in the drilling schedule is now about 4-1/2 to 5 weeks.

Drilling of the bedrock well under construction at the time I was present was being conducted using water as a drilling medium. The water was allowed to run down the hillside and into the interceptor ditch. The rig geologist indicated that nearby well showed no contamination so they were not concerned about contaminated water. She was unsure of what procedures for collecting potentially contaminated discharge would be implemented at other wells.

The issue of collecting potentially contaminated discharge was discussed with the Department of Energy Rocky Flats (DOE-RF) Area Office. The discharge water is collected in the pond onsite and monitored prior to any release offsite. However, they are not sure what procedures will be implemented in the

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they are not sure what procedures will be implemented in the future. Because the well sites are chosen to detect potential contaminants at different locations and different depths, any well (regardless of its proximity to another well) represents a potential contamination problem.

Soil gas data are being used to guide the location of monitoring wells and soil borings on the 881 hillside. Preliminary data indicate fairly widespread volatile organic contamination of the 881 hillside with localized peak con centrations. Some of the localized peaks for various volatile compounds coincide and others do not. Isolating the various sources will be a tedious task.

Preliminary geophysical data have been collected for the 903 pad and surrounding area. Follow-up geophysical investigations will be conducted on at least two areas for which preliminary surveys indicated abnormalities. Trench boundaries were not readily identifiable from the preliminary geophysics data.

We have previously indicated our concern with the schedules presented in the compliance agreement. The RI activities appear to be going as well as can be expected. However, the current compliance schedule does not allow any flexibility for accommodating uncontrollable complications or unexpected findings. Regardless of the resources expended, the compliance schedule makes achieving quality work almost unattainable.

Sincerely,

Marjorie Martz Emerson by Ken Rea

Marjorie Martz Emerson,
Environmental Surveillance

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